

Northern Regional College

Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee held on 23 October 2019 at Farm Lodge, Ballymena, commencing at 5:15pm

Present: Dr D Lennox (Chair), Mr R Cochrane, Ms A Dynes, Mr R Jay and Professor T Scott

In Attendance: Mr M Higgins and Mrs K Wallace, Secretary

43.1 Apologies and Welcome

The Chair welcomed Mr Cochrane, Student Governor, to his first meeting of Committee.

Apologies were received for Mrs Donnelly and Mr Taggart.

43.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

43.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2019 were approved.

43.4 Matters Arising

Members noted that the relevant actions from the previous meeting had been completed and also noted the T&L committee Forum annual report.

43.5 Chair's communication

The Chair advised that Mrs Eve had stepped down from the Education Committee and extended thanks for her contribution to the Committee. He also welcomed Mr Jay's membership on the committee having been extended to January 2020.

Committee noted the reducing number of Governing Body members in post, especially in the light of the upcoming departures of Mr Crossey and Mr Jay. Concern was expressed at the reduction of expertise, especially with relevant education experience from both the Education Committee and Governing Body. The impact for attaining quorum at committee meetings was raised and a number of possible options to address same were noted.

Action: The need for new Governors to be appointed to be raised at the Governing Body meeting.

43.6 Correspondence

Members noted a letter from the Director of FE Division (DfE) and guidance on the ETI inspection for 2019/20. Prof Scott updated committee on the meeting held on 4 October,

which involved representatives of all Colleges and advised that a minimum 4 weeks' notice would be provided to the College of the upcoming inspection date.

Committee noted a HLA Letter of Offer outlining funding support for the period 2019-2022. Members welcomed the inclusion of the HLA in computing for 2019/20 and congratulations were extended to Jim Nelson and his team for their work in achieving this.

An Internal Audit review of Curriculum Planning was considered and the satisfactory opinion noted. Prof Scott advised that she was the representative for FE Principals on the joint DfE/DE 14-19 project.

The submission of the QIP by 2 December 2019 was highlighted and members noted that the annual Self Evaluation Report would be considered at the next meeting of Committee, for recommendation to the Governing Body.

43.7 CDP and Education Report Card

Mr Higgins walked the Committee through the Enrolment report, summarising the enrolment position in respect of actual numbers compared to the targets for 2019/20 against each level and mode of study. He highlighted slippage in particular areas with an explanation for the slippage and planned additional activity prior to the end of the academic year.

Members noted that targets for the next year would be realigned based on an assessment of estimated recruitment numbers.

Prof Scott contextualised the impact on the sector of increasing competition from universities and post-primary schools and resulting challenges for the year ahead.

Members referred to additional comments provided on the external environmental issues impacting on enrolments and requested the inclusion within the report card to aid in the interpretation of the data. Also noted was the value which tracking of sectoral information would bring and this would be fed into the CP for 2020/21.

Action: Prof Scott and Mr Higgins will work with HoDs and the Marketing team to draw up a background paper for the Education Committee.

Mr Cochrane's insights on making ES provision more attractive were noted and would be fed back to the CMT and ES staff.

43.8 SER/QIP and PID

Members' attention was drawn to the PID which outlined the timeframe for completion of the SER in line with the submission date to DfE. An update was provided on the status of the moderation review meetings, noting that a number were unlikely to be completed by the 25th October deadline. Prof Scott would keep the Chair updated on developments and members noted the need for flexibility, especially in the absence of the VP T&L and the vacant VP position.

43.9 Teaching & Learning Committee

The minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on 27 June 2019 were noted.

43.10 Curriculum Plan

This item would be covered under reserved business.

43.11 Committee Meeting Dates

Committee meeting dates were agreed as per schedule, subject to the November meeting being moved to Newtownabbey campus.

43.12 Any Other Business

The Chair referred to the recent press coverage of Samuel Gilmore, who had recently been awarded the accolade of European Apprentice of the Year. Congratulations were extended to Samuel and to Ian Forsythe, tutor and David Russell, AHOD.

Members also noted the success of three HE students who had obtained scholarships from the British Council to participate in the Study USA programme.

43.13 Date of next meeting

11 November 2019 in Newtownabbey.

The meeting concluded at 6.40pm.

David Lennox: David Lennox
(Chair)

Date: 11/11/19
11 November 2019

Mrs K Wallace: K. Wallace
(Secretary)

